



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

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News Release

Corpus Christi ICE agents arrest four suspects, seize 1,600 lbs. of marijuana
The arrests and seizures were aided by various local, state and federal law enforcement agencies

CORPUS CHRISTI, Texas — An ICE-led multi-law enforcement drug task force yesterday arrested four suspects here and seized 1,648 lbs. of marijuana from a drug-smuggling caravan that began near Laredo, Texas.

Four vehicles traveling towards Corpus Christi, Texas, circumvented the Freer (Texas) Border Patrol checkpoint while attempting to smuggle the marijuana.

The vehicles were in a high-speed chase on Interstate 35 pursued by law enforcement officers from: Webb County, Laredo, Calhoun, Department of Public Safety (DPS), Brundi and Nueces County Constables.

The lead vehicle was driven by Miguel Moran-Gutierrez, 22, a Mexican national. All four vehicles were stopped by ICE agents, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Air and Marine Operations officers, and other agents. Four suspects were taken into custody without incident.

The four suspects are scheduled to be arraigned today. The four vehicles and the marijuana were seized at the scene. Miguel Moran-Gutierrez is the alleged leader and faces drug charges in Corpus Christi, Texas. The other three suspects also face separate charges for their roles in this alleged drug-smuggling attempt. They remain in DPS custody at this time and may be remanded to the custody of the U.S. Marshals Service this afternoon.

“This investigation highlights the unified enforcement efforts being used by law enforcement along the Texas Coastal Corridor Southern Border to combat drug smuggling and crime in general,” said Robert P. Rutt, special agent-in-charge for the ICE Office of Investigations in Houston. “We will continue to use every available tool at our disposal, and work closely with our counterparts along the southern border, to prevent criminals from smuggling their illegal cargo.”

“Our message to drug traffickers is to beware,” said Alonzo Pena, special agent-in-charge for the ICE Office of Investigations in San Antonio. “The lines of communication are up and running 24-7 among the ICE offices across the country. ICE continues to aggressively locate, arrest and bring to justice this criminal element before they can pose harm to our homeland.”

The Organized Drug Crime unit is comprised of ICE; the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS); Webb County Sheriff’s office; Kingsville Police Department; Nueces County Police; U.S. Customs and Border Protection (USCBP) Air and Marine Operations (AMO); Nueces County Constables Office; and the U.S Border Patrol.

These arrests and seizures are part of the Secure Border Initiative (SBI), a comprehensive multi-year plan by the Department of Homeland Security to secure America’s borders and reduce illegal migration. Under SBI, Homeland Security seeks to gain operational control of both the northern and southern borders, while re-engineering the detention and removal system to ensure that illegal aliens are removed from the country quickly and efficiently. SBI also involves strong interior enforcement efforts, including enhanced worksite enforcement investigations and intensified efforts to track down and remove illegal aliens inside this country.

This is an ongoing investigation.

ICE encourages the public to report suspicious activity by calling ICE’s toll free hotline at 1-866-DHS-2ICE.(1-866-347-2423).

Photos of the drugs seized are available upon request.

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of four integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.